(d) whether any effort in future are being made to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN SINGH): (a) In its annual Special 301 report for 2002, released by United States Trade Representative (USTR), India has been retained in the priority watch list alongwith fourteen other countries for, *inter-alia*, not providing an adequate level of protection for intellectual property rights.

(b) to (d) In order to comply with India's international obligations in respect of patents contained in the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, a Bill to amend the Patents Act, 1970 has been passed by Rajya Sabha on 9th May, 2002 and is now to be considered by Lok Sabha.

Textile case against US

5005. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India would take US to WTO body in textile cases as reported in the Indian Express, dated the 16th April, 2002; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY): (a) and (b) On 11 January, 2002 India requested formal consultations with the United States under the Dispute Settlement Mechanism of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) regarding the changes in rules of origin for textiles and apparel products set out in the United States' Uruguay Round Agreements Act and the Trade and Development Act of 2000. India has questioned the compatibility of the changes with the provisions of the Agreement on Rules of Origin according to which rules of origin shall not themselves create restrictive, distorting or disruptive effects on international trade, shall not be discriminatory, and shall be administered in a consistent, uniform, impartial and reasonable manner. Formal consultations have been held with the United States on 7 February 2002 and 26 March 2002.

Money Laundering Bill

5006. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to bring offences under Customs Act, 1962 and Income Tax Act under the purview of the proposed Money Laundering Bill;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the proposed Money Laundering Bill is likely to be brought before Parliament?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not apply in view of (a) above.

(c) The prevention of Money Laundering Bill was passed by the Lok Sabha on 02.12.1999. The Rajya Sabha has referred it to Select Committee which has submitted its report on 24.07.2000. The Finance Minister has given a notice to the Secretary General, Rajya Sabha on 14.02.2002 that the Bill as reported by the Select Committee be taken into consideration and that the Bill may be passed.

Distribution of foreign aid

5007. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are drawing up a plan to end the present system of only five States bagging the lion's share of external assistance;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a new formula has been evolved to distributed the foreign aid among the States on a fair and equitable basis and emphasis to correct regional imbalances; and

(d) by when the new plan is likely to be put in place?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEBVIKHE PATIL): (a) to (d) There is no separate formula to distribute external aid among States which is passed on to them in the form of additional central assistance (ACA). The quantum of such funds for a particular State depends upon several factors such as its ability to implement projects successfully, viability of projects etc. Govt. of India, however, encourages all States to access funds equally and fairly.

Growth rate in agricultural, banking and insurance sector

5008. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that agriculture, banking and insurance have registered a negative growth during 2000-2001;